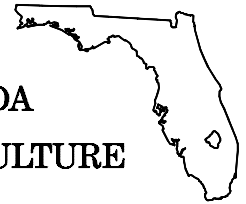




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## FLORIDA AGRICULTURE

# FARM LABOR

November 19, 2002

### FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 62,000 for the week of October 6 through 12. Farmers hired 57,000 workers compared with 43,000 in July and 51,000 in October 2001. Agricultural services provided 5,000 paid workers, up 1,000 from last quarter, but equal to the number supplied a year ago. Scattered showers dropped varying amounts of rain while warm temperatures prevailed during the survey week. Rains totaled from none to about three inches with most localities getting traces to a half inch. High humidity levels delayed some peanut and cotton harvesting until mid-day or later in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Peanut hay making gained momentum in the Panhandle. Strawberry planting was active around Plant City with about ten percent of the winter crop acreage planted during the survey week. Sugarcane growers in the Everglades prepared for the start of harvesting. Tomato picking continued around Quincy and

got underway in the southern Peninsula. Vegetable growers also marketed very light amounts of okra, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers and squash. Citrus harvest was active during the survey week. Grove caretakers mowed, chopped and disced cover crops in preparation of harvesting. Citrus growers removed and burned dead trees, planted some resets, fertilized and applied lime as needed.

The October 2002 all hired worker wage rate averaged \$8.69 per hour, fourteen cents or nearly two percent higher than the July 2002 wage of \$8.55, but down fourteen cents or about two percent from the \$8.83 paid last year. Farmers paid an average of \$8.67 per hour, nineteen cents above the \$8.48 paid in July, but seventeen cents lower than the \$8.84 paid last year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$9.00 per hour, a quarter below the \$9.25 paid in July, but thirty cents above the \$8.70 paid last year.

### UNITED STATES

There were 1.19 million hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches the week of October 6-12, 2002, down 5 percent from a year ago. There were 935 thousand workers hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 250 thousand workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage rate of \$8.93 per hour during the October 2002 survey week, up 34 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.30 per hour, up 29 cents from last October. Livestock workers earned \$8.44 per hour compared with \$8.39 a year earlier. The Field and Livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.33 was up 24 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.4 hours for hired workers during the survey week compared with 41.7 hours a year ago.

The largest decreases in number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana and Ohio), Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Lake (Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin) and Southern Plains (Texas and Oklahoma) regions. Over much of the Corn Belt, summer drought conditions and untimely rains impacted crop development and fall harvest. Corn Belt producers were just getting fall harvest underway during the survey week and hired fewer workers for longer hours. Cold temperatures in the Pacific region slowed the apple and grape harvests, curtailing the need for field laborers. Rain and wet soils in the eastern Lake region and most of the Southern Plains delayed harvest of most field crops, necessitating fewer workers.

The largest increases in number of hired farm workers over last year occurred in the Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia) region, Florida and the Mountain I (Idaho, Montana and Wyoming) region. In the Appalachian II region, more workers were employed by nurseries and greenhouses as they geared up for the holidays, and fruit harvest was in full swing in the eastern part of the region. In Florida, citrus fruit harvest was accelerating, causing the need for more workers. In the Mountain I region, harvested acres were up for most field crops, which led to an increased need for workers to complete harvest, and conditions were ideal for most of the reference week.

Hired farm worker wage rates were above a year ago in 12 of the 18 regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania), California, Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada and Utah), Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North and South Dakota) and Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi) regions. The higher wage rates in the Northeast II region were attributed to more salaried workers working fewer hours and a higher percentage of nursery workers. California's wage rate increased due to the normal seasonal shift to more full-time, higher paid employees. In the Mountain II region, winter wheat planting and fall crop harvest were nearly complete, decreasing the need for seasonal, lower paid workers. In the Northern Plains, farming operations continue to hire and maintain experienced, full-time workers. Wet conditions in the Delta led to fewer hours worked, thus increasing the

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**Table 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, October 6 - 12, 2002, with comparisons**

Employer, Year, and survey week	Hired Workers							
	Number of workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work			
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock	
		150 days or more	149 days or less					
HIRED BY FARMERS								
		Thousands		Hours	Dollars Per Hour <sup>1/</sup>			
2002								
	October 6 - 12	57.0	51.0	6.0	38.9	8.67	7.50	8.60
	July 7 - 13	43.0	38.0	5.0	37.5	8.48	7.25	7.80
	April 7 - 13	52.0	46.0	6.0	40.6	8.57	7.75	7.50
	January 6 - 12	62.0	50.0	12.0	37.2	8.97	8.15	*8.55
2001								
	October 7 - 13	51.0	44.0	7.0	41.8	8.84	7.70	8.00
	July 8 - 14	48.0	43.0	5.0	40.8	8.65	7.50	7.65
	April 8 - 14	63.0	52.0	11.0	39.9	8.40	7.75	7.90
	January 7 - 13	55.0	47.0	8.0	37.6	8.29	7.65	7.90
2000								
	October 8 - 14	50.0	43.0	7.0	38.9	8.72	8.00	7.30
HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2002								
	October 6 - 12	5.0			31.5	9.00		
	July 7 - 13	4.0			42.5	9.25		
	April 7 - 13	11.0			34.0	9.00		
	January 6 - 12	19.0			38.5	8.25		
2001								
	October 7 - 13	5.0			34.0	8.70		
	July 8 - 14	2.0			43.5	9.54		
	April 8 - 14	14.0			39.0	8.30		
	January 7 - 13	18.0			29.5	8.70		
2000								
	October 8 - 14	11.0			32.0	8.80		
HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2002								
	October 6 - 12	62.0				8.69		
	July 7 - 13	47.0				8.55		
	April 7 - 13	63.0				8.63		
	January 6 - 12	81.0				8.80		
2001								
	October 7 - 13	56.0				8.83		
	July 8 - 14	50.0				8.69		
	April 8 - 14	77.0				8.38		
	January 7 - 13	73.0				8.37		
2000								
	October 8 - 14	61.0				8.73		

<sup>1/</sup> Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

**Table 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked,  
selected States, October 6 - 12, 2002, with comparisons <sup>1/</sup>**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States <sup>2/</sup>
Thousands						
<b>All hired workers</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	57	265	58	19	8	935
July 7 - 13, 2002	43	*280	74	17	7	*1,006
October 7 - 13, 2001	51	255	68	17	8	991
<b>Expected to work</b>						
<b>150 days or more</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	51	218	46	16	7	681
July 7 - 13, 2002	38	*230	55	14	6	*723
October 7 - 13, 2001	44	200	54	14	7	708
<b>149 days or less</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	6	47	12	3	1	254
July 7 - 13, 2002	5	50	19	3	1	283
October 7 - 13, 2001	7	55	14	3	1	283
Dollars per hour <sup>3/</sup>						
<b>All hired worker wage rate</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	8.67	9.35	7.57	8.25	11.02	8.93
July 7 - 13, 2002	8.48	*8.87	7.53	8.03	11.29	*8.57
October 7 - 13, 2001	8.84	8.57	8.01	7.85	10.78	8.59
<b>Wages by type of worker</b>						
<b>Field &amp; Livestock</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	7.72	8.62	7.18	7.42	9.32	8.33
July 7 - 13, 2002	7.38	*8.32	7.14	7.43	9.67	8.02
October 7 - 13, 2001	7.74	8.04	7.52	7.25	9.39	8.09
<b>Field</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	7.50	8.51	7.05	7.07	9.25	8.30
July 7 - 13, 2002	7.25	*8.18	7.06	7.15	9.65	*7.90
October 7 - 13, 2001	7.70	7.91	7.16	6.87	9.32	8.01
<b>Livestock</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	8.60	9.42	7.32	8.24	<sup>4/</sup>	8.44
July 7 - 13, 2002	7.80	*9.65	7.23	8.11	<sup>4/</sup>	*8.38
October 7 - 13, 2001	8.00	9.56	7.97	8.13	<sup>4/</sup>	8.39
Average hours per week						
<b>Hours worked by all hired workers</b>						
<b>October 6 - 12, 2002</b>	38.9	45.5	41.7	45.7	37.9	40.4
July 7 - 13, 2002	37.5	*46.0	39.7	42.8	38.0	*40.0
October 7 - 13, 2001	41.8	46.7	40.0	46.6	37.6	41.7

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service workers. <sup>2/</sup> United States excludes Alaska. <sup>3/</sup> Value of any perquisites provided are not included in wage rates. <sup>4/</sup> Insufficient data for this category; included in all hired wages. \*Revised.

**Table 3--Annual average wage rates, number of hired workers, and hours worked, 2002 and 2001** <sup>1/ 2/</sup>

State and Region	Wages by Type of Worker			Number of Hired Workers	Hours Worked by Hired Workers
	All Hired	Field	Field & Livestock		
2002					
Florida	8.69	7.71	7.78	53.5	38.5
Texas & Oklahoma	7.76	7.17	7.29	63.2	40.5
Arizona & New Mexico	8.23	7.33	7.61	18.5	45.6
California	9.13	8.31	8.44	244.0	44.5
Hawaii	11.07	9.40	9.42	7.5	37.1
United States <sup>3/</sup>	8.80	8.11	8.17	884.5	39.8
2001					
Florida	8.54	7.66	7.69	54.3	40.0
Texas & Oklahoma	7.74	7.01	7.28	73.8	38.7
Arizona & New Mexico	7.77	6.88	7.12	18.8	46.1
California	8.67	7.89	8.02	209.0	42.8
Hawaii	10.83	9.26	9.29	7.3	36.9
United States <sup>3/</sup>	8.45	7.78	7.86	873.3	39.9

<sup>1/</sup> Excludes Agricultural Service Workers. <sup>2/</sup> Annual rates are averages of the published wage rates for each survey week weighted by the number of hours worked during the week. The annual average for all States, Regions, and the U.S. is based on data collected for January, April, July, and October. <sup>3/</sup> Excludes AK.

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average hourly wage for salaried workers. There was also a higher percentage of catfish workers in Mississippi.

Regions showing the largest declines in the hired farm worker wage rates were the Corn Belt I, Southern Plains and Pacific regions. Declining hired wage rates in the Corn Belt I region were attributed to salaried employees that worked more hours during grain harvest, which lowered the average

hourly rate. Calving and lambing seasons in the Southern Plains region led to more hours worked for salaried employees, lowering the hourly wage. Fruit harvest in the Pacific region was hampered by sub-freezing temperatures. Fewer higher paid fruit pickers lowered the overall average wage rate for the region.